

In This Issue...

- 2 **In Box**
- 3 **Breaking News**
ACTA Releases New Guide Addressing College Drinking and Drug Use
Asking Questions, Getting Answers
- 4 **Effective Trusteeship**
Scott Millar on University Governance
Strengthening U.S. History Requirements
- 5 **Heard on Campus**
Former ACTA Lewit Fellow Presents Thesis
- 6 **Speaking Up**
Samuel Abrams Defends Free Expression
- 7 **In Memoriam**
Endowed Chair Enhances Viewpoint Diversity at University of Vermont
ACTA Board Member Enters DC Hall of Fame
- 8 Meet ACTA's New Board Chair

José Cabranes to be Honored with Merrill Award

ACTA is pleased to announce the winner of our 2019 Philip Merrill Award for Outstanding Contributions to Liberal Arts Education, The Honorable José A. Cabranes, who will receive the award at our 2019 ATHENA Merrill Award Gala.

As a highly-respected jurist and a former trustee of Yale, Columbia, and Colgate universities, Judge Cabranes has never failed to take a principled stand for liberty—defending the academic freedom, academic tenure, and due process rights of university professors. Judge Cabranes very well understands that the decay of academic freedom and freedom of expression at our institutions of higher education is not confined to America's college campuses, but affects our entire society. His warnings have reverberated across the nation, calling university leaders and administrators to account, and urging them to protect free expression on their campuses and in their school policies.



In recent years, institutions of higher education have been roiled by disinvitations of speakers, bias response teams, and censorship. In response to these challenges, Judge Cabranes delivered a clarion defense

of free expression and its vital role in liberal arts education and in our democracy. In a powerful article published on January 10, 2017, in the *Washington Post*, Judge Cabranes wrote: “Our universities today must pay more than lip service to free expression. They must develop and maintain procedures that protect professors’ ability to teach and learn without fear of retaliation. While

political alignments may have flipped, the choice remains the same: academic freedom or civilizational decline.”

His remarks came in response to widespread threats to free speech after student protests against Yale University administrator Nicholas Christakis and his wife, Yale Pro-

(continued on 2)

Register for ATHENA Roundtable 2019!

ACTA's **2019 ATHENA Roundtable** event will be held on **October 18** at the Ronald Reagan Building in Washington, DC. Join us for a morning discussion with higher education leaders; a keynote by Sarah Lawrence College Professor Samuel Abrams, one of ACTA's **Heroes of Intellectual Freedom**; and a dinner gala for the presentation of the 15th annual **Philip Merrill Award** to The Honorable José Cabranes. For more information or to register for the event, please visit www.GoACTA.org/events/ATHENA.

www.GoACTA.org

info@GoACTA.org

1-888-ALUMNI-8

Jan Sullivan, Regent, University of Hawaii

“Congratulations on the launch of your great admin costs calculator. We were reviewing the data at our board meeting. I think it’s a great tool and just wanted to thank you all for the good work.”

Editor’s Note: ACTA recently launched an innovative, interactive online resource that empowers users to access and analyze college spending data: HowCollegesSpendMoney.com.

Robert Fiddes, Trustee

George S. Parker II Charitable Trusts, Beloit, WI

“ACTA is certainly positioned now to enhance its leadership role in postsecondary education. . . ACTA is the place to be to make a difference. As I like to say, a standard in a world of maybe.”

Craig Stewart, Trustee and President

Apex Foundation, Bellevue, WA

“Thanks for sharing this podcast. Powerful indictment of the decline of civility and true diversity on today’s college campuses.”

Editor’s Note: ACTA’s discussion with Professor Samuel Abrams of Sarah Lawrence College is available on our podcast, [Higher Ed Now](http://HigherEdNow.com).

John Altman, Chairman

John W. Altman Charitable Foundation, Reno, NV

“What a creative way to respond to the college admissions scandal—something all college admissions counselors should see.”

John Bruning, Trustee

University of Rochester

“ACTA has been consistent in raising this issue and others with excellent supporting material. It is quite predictable how these topics must reach a critical mass before the public begins to take notice. ACTA has been rigorous, consistent, and prepared to address each of these important issues.”

Editor’s Note: ACTA released a powerful call to action concerning the recent college admissions scandal. View goacta.org/news/the-college-admissions-scandal-a-call-to-action.

Robert Newman, President and Director

National Humanities Center, Research Triangle, NC

“The missions of our two organizations have some wonderful overlaps, so let’s continue to explore how we might coordinate. . . I’m reading the materials you gave me with admiration for their cogency and trepidation for why they exist.”

Merrill Award, continued from 1

fessor Erika Christakis. Following these protests, which made national headlines, Judge Cabranes—who served as Yale’s first General Counsel—took a powerful stand against Yale’s “Bystander Surveillance Reporting” training sessions for graduate students, bias intervention training for university administrators, and the anonymous complaint app and hotline introduced by the institution as a tool to police the teaching of professors. His work to republish the 1975 Woodward Report on Freedom of Expression at Yale and exhort the University to return again to its national role of defending the First Amendment is a powerful defense of academic freedom.

With the Merrill Award, ACTA applauds Judge Cabranes’s unflinching defense of academic freedom. As the first

Puerto Rican appointed to the federal bench in the continental United States, Judge Cabranes has made it his life’s mission to uphold and protect the most precious liberties that are indispensable for the health of a free society.

“Our universities today must pay more than lip service to free expression. They must develop and maintain procedures that protect professors’ ability to teach and learn without fear of retaliation. While political alignments may have flipped, the choice remains the same: academic freedom or civilizational decline.”

José A. Cabranes, Washington Post, January 10, 2017

He was appointed a Judge of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit in 1994. At the time of his appointment, he was Chief Judge of the U.S. District Court for the District of Connecticut, a court to which he had been appointed in 1979.

In 2013, Chief Justice Roberts appointed him to serve also on the three-judge U.S. Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court of Review (FISCR), and in 2018, as Presiding Judge of the FISCR. He served as Chairman of the Board of Directors of

Aspira of New York, a national organization that helps inner-city Hispanic youth prepare for college, and the Puerto Rican Legal Defense and Education Fund, of which he was a founding member. His commitment to upholding the law, protecting civil rights,

and promoting access to an excellent education is profound and far-reaching.

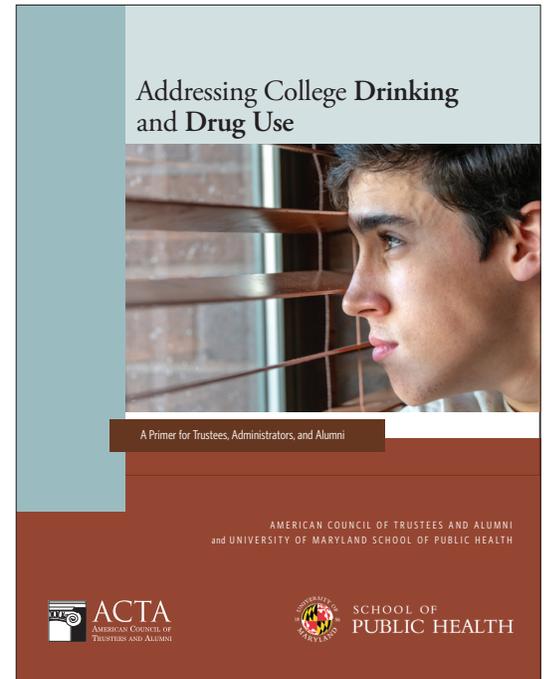
With the enthusiastic recommendation of ACTA’s Merrill Selection Committee, we are honored to bestow this Award on Judge José Cabranes. ●

ACTA Releases New Guide Addressing College Drinking and Drug Use

In 2012, ACTA released a short booklet for trustees concerning the problem of substance use on campus. Seven years later, the statistics on substance use remain grim: 35% of college students report having been drunk during the past month; nonmedical use of prescription stimulants like Adderall® and Ritalin® among college students nearly doubled between 2008 and 2013; and between 2014 and 2017, cannabis use increased by 11%. To help trustees curb these harmful trends, this month ACTA released *Addressing College Drinking and Drug Use: A Primer for Trustees, Administrators, and Alumni*. Co-authored by Dr. Amelia Arria of the Maryland School of Public Health and Greta Wagley, ACTA's editor and researcher, the guide reports the latest statistics on college student substance use and provides recommendations for college leadership to form effective prevention plans at their institutions.

Addressing College Drinking and Drug Use gives higher education leadership a comprehensive view of the extent to which students are using alcohol and other drugs, and how substance use influences student safety, personal relationships, and Greek life. The report particularly examines how substance use affects students' academic success. Excessive drinking and cannabis use can significantly diminish students' commitment to their academic work and have adverse effects on their ability to succeed both personally and professionally.

The guide helps trustees and administrators address these problems and build a prevention strategy that accommodates the unique needs of their institutions. Substance use affects every area of the university—academics, resident life, safety, and student engagement—and can only be



tackled with an ongoing comprehensive approach. The most successful substance use prevention programs involve a multi-component strategy that incorporates many levels of university personnel, from trustees to health and wellness counselors, as well as collaboration

(continued on 6)

Asking Questions, Getting Answers

In April, ACTA released a new edition of our trustee guide *Asking Questions, Getting Answers*, updated to address the most pressing challenges higher education leaders face today. For both new and returning trustees, navigating the complex governance system at their institutions is no easy task. *Asking Questions, Getting Answers* gathers together the major questions that trustees should ask in the boardroom. The guidebook highlights the subjects most urgently requiring trustee attention, and empowers trustees to raise these issues effectively with their president and fellow board members. The new edition prepares board members with the basics on admissions and graduation requirements, general education programs, policies on free speech, and procedures for faculty hiring, review, and promotion. The booklet also includes guidelines to administer effective financial oversight, focusing on tuition costs and the responsible allocation of resources to fund new and existing programs.

Board members must take independent, ongoing responsibility for understanding the wide range of issues that affect their institutions. ACTA is committed to helping trustees fulfill this important duty. With *Asking Questions, Getting Answers* in hand, trustees can exercise informed oversight over their institutions and remain accountable to the public trust. ●

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Effective TRUSTEESHIP



Scott Millar on University Governance

Scott Millar is a member of the Board of Visitors at Christopher Newport University (CNU) and has previously served in the role of Rector on the Board.

What are the imperatives for taking the position of Rector? The most important aspect in terms of being a leader on a board is the ability to listen to a number of different constituencies. This includes the president and the administration of the university. It includes the faculty. It includes the students. We can never forget about them. It also includes the community and the region within which the university exists.

How do trustees communicate with those constituencies? The way the trustees bring information from the wider university community back to the university is for trustees to go out and be part of the community. Here at CNU, at each board meeting, we take time to hear students' voices and understand their perspectives of university life. These students

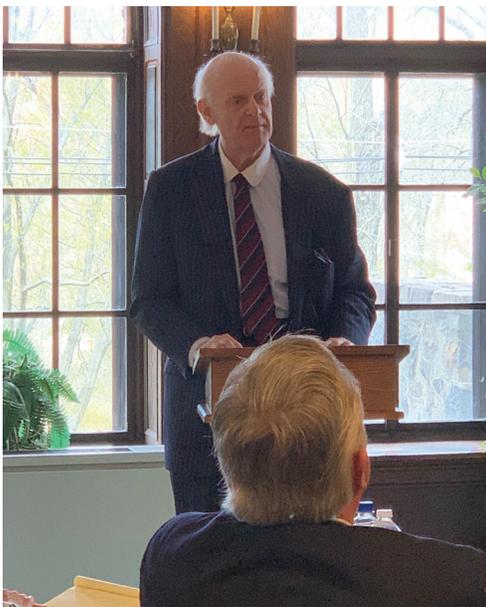


may be those who have experienced a study abroad experience, student athletes, and students in leadership programs or Greek organizations. We also had a Board/University Visit Day. We got out of the boardroom and into the classroom. We attended athletic practices, we attended rehearsals for our theater and choir groups. This is a way to stay in touch, to understand what's happening on the ground here on a daily basis.

What advantages does a strong core curriculum bring to the University and students? CNU has an extremely strong

(continued on 5)

Strengthening U.S. History Requirements



Dr. Allen Guelzo delivers keynote address at trustee seminar on the importance of requiring U.S. history.

ACTA has relaunched our regional trustee seminar series to help college leaders address a variety of issues encountered by governing boards, including how to strengthen academic requirements at their institutions.

On April 15, ACTA hosted a seminar titled "What Every College Student Should Know about U.S. History" at Eastern University in St. Davids, Pennsylvania. Thanks to a generous donation from the Philip M. McKenna Foundation, 18 trustees and administrators representing a dozen higher education institutions participated in discussions on the pressing need to require U.S. history in the core curriculum. Eastern University President Ronald A. Matthews opened the seminar, and ACTA President Michael Poliakoff set an inspiring tone for the day, praising attendees for following in the footsteps of great Americans—and college trustees—such as Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, Patrick Henry, and Benjamin Franklin, who recognized the importance of strong civic education.

Dr. Allen Guelzo, Civil War historian and professor at Gettysburg College, delivered the keynote address, "10 Things Every College Student Should Know about U.S. History." Participants engaged in guided discussions on college students' lack of knowledge about our nation, and what role trustees have in fostering this education on their campuses. Attendees received information specific to their institution's course requirements to help them understand the structure of their core

curricula and how to add a U.S. history requirement. ACTA received wonderful feedback, and we are continuing our efforts to provide more students with a strong foundation for understanding the history and institutions of our country. ●



H E A R D C A M P U S O N

Williams Faculty Want Free Speech

Half of the 400 professors at Williams College in Massachusetts have signed a faculty petition to adopt the Chicago Principles. The petition states, “While there is an understandable desire to protect our students from speech they find offensive, doing so risks shutting down legitimate dialogue and failing to prepare our students to deal effectively with a diversity of opinions, including views they might vehemently disagree with.”

Students have issued a counter-petition in which they argue that the unfettered free speech supported in the Chicago Principles harms minority students. Williams President Maud Mandel has organized a committee on free speech made up of faculty, administrators, and students to develop policies about campus speakers, free expression, and inclusivity. The committee has advocated providing advisers to student clubs to preside over discussions about which speakers to invite.

This recommendation sets a dangerous tone for free speech at Williams. ACTA stands with the Williams faculty and calls on President Mandel to adopt the Chicago Principles, which have already been adopted by many of Williams’s peer institutions, including Amherst College, Princeton University, Smith College, and Colgate University.

College Admissions in Crisis

On March 12, the Department of Justice announced 50 indictments in an investigation that has been dubbed “Operation Varsity Blues” by the FBI. Dozens of individuals, including prominent business leaders and celebrities, were involved in a fraudulent scheme to obtain college admissions through bribing college coaches, false representation of applicants’ athletic abilities, and cheating on the SAT and ACT tests. Some parents paid exorbitant sums, up to \$6.5 million, to guarantee admission for their children to institutions including Georgetown University, the University of Southern California, Yale University, Stanford University, and others.

ACTA has long warned students and families against using prestige and exclusivity as indicators of an institution’s quality. A school’s value should not be based on how many applicants it can attract and then reject, but on the commitment of the school to the academic, personal, and professional growth of its students. ACTA’s *What Will They Learn?* survey shows that there are hundreds of affordable institutions across the country that are deeply committed to student success, and we must all look to support them. ●

Former ACTA Lewit Fellow Presents Thesis



Rachel Wagner on left with fellow classmates.

Rachel Wagner, ACTA’s 2018 Robert Lewit Fellow, delivered an honors thesis, “Memento Mori: Morality, Civil Society, and Statesmanship,” in Christopher Newport University’s Interdisciplinary Studies Program. ACTA President Michael Poliakoff and CNU President Paul Tribble attended the presentation.

CNU has been a pillar of academic freedom and academic excellence in American higher education. The institution receives an “A” rating from ACTA’s *What Will They Learn?* survey for its core curriculum that requires undergraduates to take a robust set of courses in the foundational liberal arts. CNU also recently adopted a free speech policy modeled on the Chicago Principles of Freedom of Expression. ●

Scott Millar, *continued from 4*

core curriculum rooted very strongly in the liberal arts. The core curriculum includes . . . history, math, philosophy, science, subjects we feel that a broadly educated individual needs for the future. The core curriculum requires that students have analytical and critical thinking, are able to make key judgments, have decision-making abilities, and are able to synthesize answers and analyze the different choices that they have—these are valuable skills that are going to pay dividends not just in their immediate years after their attendance here at Christopher Newport, but in many, many years to come throughout their career and, in fact, throughout their entire life.

What is your view of the future of higher education and what can trustees bring to that? Our country is heading in new directions. Higher education is heading in new directions. There are certainly revenue and expenditure challenges on the horizon. But at the end of the day, we need knowledgeable, informed citizens who can guide this country in the proper direction. And higher education is the way to ensure that future generations have the proper knowledge, the proper intellect, the proper analytical ability, and the proper decision-making ability in order to make prudent, good, and reasonable decisions for the future of this Commonwealth and the future of this country. ●

Samuel Abrams Defends Free Expression



Professor Samuel Abrams, former University of Pennsylvania trustee Paul Levy, and ACTA President Michael Poliakoff discuss the threats that campus monocultures pose to freedom of expression.

Samuel Abrams, professor of political science at Sarah Lawrence College, recently joined ACTA and former University of Pennsylvania trustee Paul Levy on our podcast **Higher Ed Now** to discuss the future of academic freedom on college campuses.

ACTA has honored Professor Abrams as a member of our Heroes of Intellectual Freedom initiative, which recognizes members of the academic community who protect and foster the robust exchange of diverse viewpoints that is at the heart of liberal arts education.

Professor Abrams faced protests by students and backlash from Sarah Lawrence’s administration after publishing an article in the *New York Times* titled “Think Professors Are Liberal? Try School Administrators.” The article examined the ideological imbalance within higher education administration and the need for a range of diverse opinions to be voiced on campus.

Instead of engaging the arguments posed in his article, students vandalized

his office door and ripped down photos of his son. Sarah Lawrence’s president challenged Professor Abrams’s decision to publish the article, and students have demanded that they be allowed to review his tenure. This was familiar to Paul Levy, who had eloquently defended Penn Law Professor Amy Wax, receiving for his courage ACTA’s Jerry L. Martin Prize for Excellence in College Trusteeship.

Professor Abrams has now doubled down on his defense of intellectual

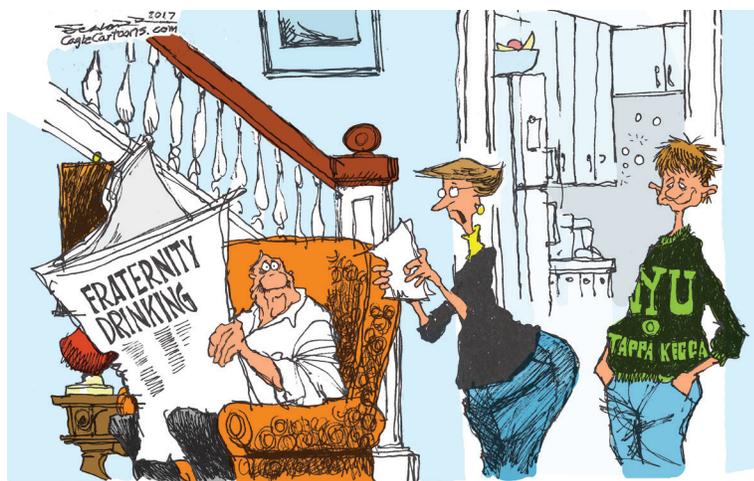
diversity. On ACTA’s podcast, he shared that “It was very important to me that the echo chamber be broken. . . . We need to be able to have open discourse, dialogue, and debate. If we cannot do it, this is a problem. That is why I have been pushing so hard. That is why I have put my neck out.”

To listen to ACTA’s full discussion with Professor Abrams, visit the multimedia section of GoACTA.org. ●

College Drinking and Drug Use, *continued from 3*

with other campuses and the local community. The guide provides evidence-based strategies from institutions such as the University of Maryland and Purdue University, including campus recreational programming that provides alternatives to activities posing high risk for substance use; drug and alcohol screening; and statewide legislative initiatives that make campuses safer.

As leaders of their institutions, college and university trustees are uniquely positioned to ensure that their campuses work to address the impact of alcohol and drug use on student achievement, as well as the more dangerous substance-related tragedies that have made headlines in recent years. ACTA will be convening seminars in Fall 2019 and Spring 2020 for university presidents and trustees to share effective strategies, form and implement a comprehensive prevention plan at their institutions, and consider broader policies at the local and state level. Together, college leadership can help to impress upon students from every region that they must not



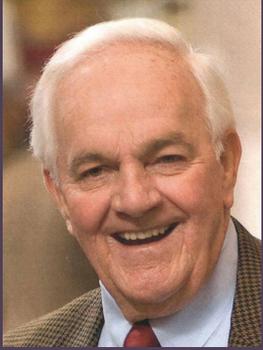
College Drinking published October 28, 2011 by Bill Schorr, politicalcartoons.com

“THE GOOD NEWS IS, HE GOT A 3.0...THE BAD NEWS IS IT'S HIS BLOOD ALCOHOL LEVEL...”

allow substance use to interfere with the precious opportunity that college students have to learn and grow.

For a full copy of the report, please go to GoACTA.org or contact ACTA at 202-467-6787. ●

In Memoriam: Franklin “Pepper” Laughon



ACTA mourns the loss of Franklin “Pepper” Laughon, who passed away on November 22, 2018. Mr. Laughon was a long-serving member of Randolph-Macon College’s board of trustees and a faithful supporter of ACTA. We honor his dedication to excellence in higher education and his generous life of public service. A native of Richmond, Virginia, Mr. Laughon attended Randolph-Macon College, then served two years in Germany as an Army Combat Photographer. Upon his return home to the Commonwealth, he began a long career in business, becoming the president and CEO of Richmond Cold Storage in 1973, which operated across Virginia, North Carolina, Georgia, and Alabama. He was inducted into the Great Richmond Business Hall of Fame in 2014. Mr. Laughon was a pillar of the Richmond community. He volunteered his time in a number of roles, with Kiwanis International, BB&T Bank, the Richmond Eye and Ear Hospital, and Rubicon, Inc. As a trustee at Randolph-Macon, he was active with the student affairs and athletics committees, as well as the Greek alumni advisory board. He is survived by his wife of 56 years, Stuart Bost Laughon; his two daughters; four grandchildren; two great grandchildren; and many other family members, friends, and colleagues who were touched by his life. May he rest in peace after a life full of significance and service. ●

Endowed Chair Enhances Viewpoint Diversity at University of Vermont

Thanks to a generous gift from business leader Angelo Pizzagalli to endow a new faculty position, University of Vermont (UVM) students will benefit from new opportunities to study free market economics.

The Fund for Academic Renewal (FAR) assisted Mr. Pizzagalli in establishing the Pizzagalli Chair of Free Enterprise at the Grossman School of Business at the University of Vermont. Mr. Pizzagalli had been generous to his alma mater previously, but with this gift he focused on the goal of creating a lasting legacy, one that would emphasize and explain the role of free enterprise in an open society, attracting and inspiring students with an entrepreneurial spirit.

“In higher education, you have the ability to influence the upcoming generation and to help shape future leaders and informed voters,” said Mr. Pizzagalli. “The people at the Fund for Academic Renewal impressed us. They understood what we were trying to do and gave us assistance in achieving it. FAR really made the process easy, transparent, and seamless. I don’t think that I would have been as successful managing my philanthropy on my own without FAR’s assistance.”

At a celebration on April 18, Professor Andrey Ukhov was honored as the inaugural holder of the Pizzagalli Chair of Free Enterprise. “We are very appreciative of the donation from Angelo Pizzagalli and the Pizzagalli Foundation that made it possible for the University to attract such extraordinary talent to our faculty,” said UVM President Tom Sullivan. Dean Sanjay Sharma echoed President Sullivan’s sentiments, stating that the hiring of Dr. Ukhov “adds greatly to the intellectual depth of our school and will help elevate our global reputation.”

Through targeted giving, donors like Mr. Pizzagalli play an important role in restoring viewpoint diversity and academic excellence to our institutions of higher learning. FAR guides donors and their advisors through every step of the gift-making process, including legal review from the Washington, DC, law firm of Arnold & Porter. Thanks to a generous grant from the Diana Davis Spencer Foundation, FAR provides this service at no cost.

To learn more about ACTA’s Fund for Academic Renewal, please contact Dr. Ali Eskandarian at 202-467-6787 or aeskandarian@AcademicRenewal.org. ●

ACTA Board Member Enters DC Hall of Fame



Stephen Joel Trachtenberg, a member of ACTA’s Board of Directors and President Emeritus and University Professor of Public Service at The George Washington University, was inducted into the Washington, DC, Hall of Fame Society in April. He received the Legacy Award in the field of education for his contributions to the District of Columbia. Through his numerous public service positions, President Trachtenberg has supported minority students, scholarship programs, and public school partnerships. He has received several awards for his contributions to civic life, including the U.S. Department of State Secretary’s Open Forum Distinguished Public Service Award in 1997 and the U.S. Treasury Department’s Medal of Merit in 2002. ACTA congratulates President Trachtenberg on a career full of outstanding accomplishments. ●



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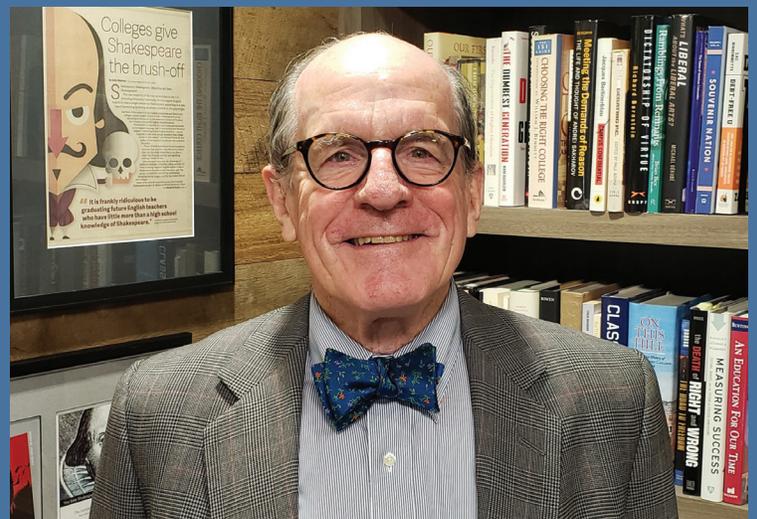
Meet ACTA's New Board Chair

Robert T. Lewit, chairman of ACTA's Board of Directors since May 2009, stepped down in April and has been elected as treasurer of the Board, a post he held previously from 2004-2009. ACTA is immensely grateful for Dr. Lewit's committed leadership of our board. His vision and counsel has been instrumental to our mission and to the expansion of ACTA's reach in the last decade.

We welcome **Edwin D. Williamson**, who is taking over the helm as ACTA's new chairman. Mr. Williamson is dedicated to higher education reform, and served as a former chairman of the board of regents and as a former trustee of the University of the South. He graduated from the New York University School of Law in 1964, and went to work at the firm of Sullivan & Cromwell, becoming a partner in 1971 and Senior Counsel in 2006.

He is an expert in public international law and national security issues. He served as the Legal Advisor of the U.S. Department of State from 1990-1993, where he helped form the legal positions of the United States in the 1990-1991 Persian Gulf Conflict, during the dissolution of Yugoslavia, and during the Serbian-Bosnian conflict. Mr. Williamson is a member of the Council of Foreign Relations and the American Law Institute, and has served on the Executive Council of the American Society of International Law.

He has also served on many corporate and philanthropic boards, including as vice chairman and a member of the Executive Board of



the Business and Industry Advisory Committee to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and of the Executive Committee of the U.S. Council for International Business (USCIB).

ACTA is proud to have such esteemed public leaders on our board whose valuable insights have helped guide the essential work we do to usher in a new era of transparency and excellence in higher education. We look forward to benefitting from Mr. Williamson's principled leadership as we continue to promote academic excellence, academic freedom, and accountability at colleges and universities across the country. ●